

(b) Whenever possible, contracting officers shall ensure that references in specifications are to widely recognized standards or specifications promulgated by governments, industries, or technical societies.

(c) When *brand name or equal* descriptions are necessary, specifications must clearly identify and describe the particular physical, functional, or other characteristics of the brand-name items which are considered essential to satisfying the requirement.

(d) In accordance with Executive Order 13202, of February 17, 2001, Preservation of Open Competition and Government Neutrality Towards Government Contractors' Labor Relations on Federal and Federally Funded Construction Projects, as amended on April 6, 2001—

(1) The Government, or any construction manager acting on behalf of the Government, must not—

(i) Require or prohibit offerors, contractors, or subcontractors to enter into or adhere to agreements with one or more labor organizations (as defined in 42 U.S.C. 2000e(d)) on the same or other related construction projects; or

(ii) Otherwise discriminate against offerors, contractors, or subcontractors for becoming, refusing to become, or remaining signatories or otherwise adhering to agreements with one or more labor organizations, on the same or other related construction projects.

(2) Nothing in this paragraph prohibits offerors, contractors, or subcontractors from voluntarily entering into project labor agreements.

(3) The head of the agency may exempt a construction project from this policy if the agency head finds that, as of February 17, 2001—

(i) The agency or a construction manager acting on behalf of the Government had issued or was a party to bid specifications, project agreements, agreements with one or more labor organizations, or other controlling documents with respect to that particular project, which contained any of the requirements or prohibitions in paragraph (d)(1) of this section; and

(ii) One or more construction contracts subject to such requirements or prohibitions had been awarded.

(4) The head of the agency may exempt a particular project, contract, or subcontract from this policy upon a finding that special circumstances require an exemption in order to avert an imminent threat to public health or safety, or to serve the national security. A finding of "special circumstances" may not be based on the possibility or presence of a labor dispute concerning the use of contractors or subcontractors who are nonsignatories to, or otherwise do not adhere to, agreements with one or more labor organizations, or concerning employees on the project who are not members of or affiliated with a labor organization.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 60 FR 48249, Sept. 18, 1995; 66 FR 27415, May 16, 2001]

36.203 Government estimate of construction costs.

(a) An independent Government estimate of construction costs shall be prepared and furnished to the contracting officer at the earliest practicable time for each proposed contract and for each contract modification anticipated to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold. The contracting officer may require an estimate when the cost of required work is not anticipated to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold. The estimate shall be prepared in as much detail as though the Government were competing for award.

(b) When two-step sealed bidding is used, the independent Government estimate shall be prepared when the contract requirements are definitized.

(c) Access to information concerning the Government estimate shall be limited to Government personnel whose official duties require knowledge of the estimate. An exception to this rule may be made during contract negotiations to allow the contracting officer to identify a specialized task and disclose the associated cost breakdown figures in the Government estimate, but only to the extent deemed necessary to arrive at a fair and reasonable price. The overall amount of the Government's estimate shall not be

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disclosed except as permitted by agency regulations.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 50 FR 1744, Jan. 11, 1985; 50 FR 52429, Dec. 23, 1985; 62 FR 44829, Aug. 22, 1997; 71 FR 57368, Sept. 28, 2006]

36.204 Disclosure of the magnitude of construction projects.

Advance notices and solicitations shall state the magnitude of the requirement in terms of physical characteristics and estimated price range. In no event shall the statement of magnitude disclose the Government's estimate. Therefore, the estimated price should be described in terms of one of the following price ranges:

- (a) Less than \$25,000.
- (b) Between \$25,000 and \$100,000.
- (c) Between \$100,000 and \$250,000.
- (d) Between \$250,000 and \$500,000.
- (e) Between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.
- (f) Between \$1,000,000 and \$5,000,000.
- (g) Between \$5,000,000 and \$10,000,000.
- (h) More than \$10,000,000.

36.205 Statutory cost limitations.

(a) Contracts for construction shall not be awarded at a cost to the Government—

(1) In excess of statutory cost limitations, unless applicable limitations can be and are waived in writing for the particular contract; or

(2) Which, with allowances for Government-imposed contingencies and overhead, exceeds the statutory authorization.

(b) Solicitations containing one or more items subject to statutory cost limitations shall state (1) the applicable cost limitation for each affected item in a separate schedule; (2) that an offer which does not contain separately-priced schedules will not be considered; and (3) that the price on each schedule shall include an approximate apportionment of all estimated direct costs, allocable indirect costs, and profit.

(c) The Government shall reject an offer if its prices exceed applicable statutory limitations, unless laws or agency procedures provide pertinent exemptions. However, if it is in the Government's interest, the contracting officer may include a provision in the solicitation which permits the award of

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separate contracts for individual items whose prices are within or not subject to applicable statutory limitations.

(d) The Government shall also reject an offer if its prices are within statutory limitations only because it is materially unbalanced. An offer is unbalanced if its prices are significantly less than cost for some work, and overstated for other work.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 50 FR 1744, Jan. 11, 1985; 50 FR 52429, Dec. 23, 1985; 62 FR 237, Jan. 2, 1997]

36.206 Liquidated damages.

The contracting officer must evaluate the need for liquidated damages in a construction contract in accordance with 11.502 and agency regulations.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 60 FR 48249, Sept. 18, 1995; 65 FR 46066, July 26, 2000]

36.207 Pricing fixed-price construction contracts.

(a) Generally, firm-fixed-price contracts shall be used to acquire construction. They may be priced (1) on a lump-sum basis (when a lump sum is paid for the total work or defined parts of the work), (2) on a unit-price basis (when a unit price is paid for a specified quantity of work units), or (3) using a combination of the two methods.

(b) Lump-sum pricing shall be used in preference to unit pricing except when—

(1) Large quantities of work such as grading, paving, building outside utilities, or site preparation are involved;

(2) Quantities of work, such as excavation, cannot be estimated with sufficient confidence to permit a lump-sum offer without a substantial contingency;

(3) Estimated quantities of work required may change significantly during construction; or

(4) Offerors would have to expend unusual effort to develop adequate estimates.

(c) Fixed-price contracts with economic price adjustment may be used if